

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

AID-05 OES-03 EB-07 COME-00 OMB-01 AF-06 ARA-06

EUR-12 NEA-09 SAJ-01 /110 W
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R 241515Z FEB 75

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 919

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 1231

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PDIP, WHO, SZ, VS, VN, AORG, IR, EG, OPEC

SUBJECT: PROPOSED PRG OBSERVER STATUS AT 7TH WMO CONGRESS

REF: (A) GENEVA 0254; (B) GENEVA 990

1. SUMMARY. A REQUEST FOR SECRETARIAT CLARIFICATION OF A COMMENT MADE BY WMO SYG REVEALS THAT THE WMO METHOD OF COUNTING VOTES ON OBSERVER POSTAL BALLOT HAS BEEN RADICALLY CHANGED SINCE IT FIRST EXPLAINED TO US IN MID-JANUARY (REF A). NOW EACH "COUNTRY" (INCLUDING PRG) LISTED ON MAIL BALLOT WILL BE CONSIDERED SEPARATELY AND WITHOUT RELATION TO OTHERS FOR BOTH QUORUM COUNT AND REQUIRED TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY. ALTHOUGH BALNK VOTE OR ABSTENTION ON PRG LINE OF BALLOT MAY THUS IN FACT FAVOR US POSITION, POSSIBILITY OF CONTINUED VACILLATION BY SECRETARIAT AND OTHER VARIABLES LEAD MISSION CONCLUDE THAT NO CHANGE IN INSTRUCTION IS WARRANTED. END SUMMARY.

2. IN A CONVERSATION FEBRUARY 13, 1975 (REF B), ON OTHER SUBJECTS WMO SECGEN DAVIES REMARKED IN PASSING THAT EACH ENTITY ON OBSERVER VOTING SLIP
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WOULD BE CONSIDERED AS THOUGH IT WERE A SEPARATE

ITEM ON A SEPARATE BALLOT. SINCE THIS APPEARED TO REPRESENT A CHANGE FROM THE COUNTING SYSTEM DESCRIBED BY HIS DEPUTY IN MID-JANUARY, MISSION APPROACHED DEP SEC GEN ONCE MORE FOR CLARIFICATION.

3. WMO DEP SEC GEN LANGLO CONFIRMED THAT A CHANGE HAD BEEN MADE. WE EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT SUCH WAS THE CASE, AND DISMAY THAT WE HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED WHEN THE CHANGE WAS MADE.

4. DR. LANGLO EXPLAINED THAT NO INSTRUCTIONS HAD BEEN WRITTEN DOWN FOR DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE WMO STAFF AND THAT IN EFFECT THE SEC GEN WAS HANDLING ALL ASPECTS OF THIS VOTE PERSONALLY. WE ASKED IF HE BELIEVED IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR US TO ASK FOR AN EXPLANATION IN WRITING HOW THE WMO INTENDED TO COUNT THE VOTE. LANGLO OBSERVED THAT SINCE THE VOTE WAS IN PROGRESS IT MIGHT BE "AWKWARD" FOR WMO TO RESPOND TO SUCH A QUESTION AT THIS TIME.

5. WE OBSERVED THAT IT WAS NEITHER OUR INTENTION TO TRY TO INFLUENCE THE VOTE THROUGH THE SECRETARIAT NOR TO INFLUENCE THE SECRETARIAT'S INTERPRETATION OF WMO RULES AND REGULATIONS. HOWEVER, FROM A PRACTICAL POINT OF VIEW IT WAS DIFFICULT TO KNOW EXACTLY JUST WHEN IT WAS APPROPRIATE TO ASK THE SECRETARIAT FOR AN INTERPRETATION OF THE RULES FOR WHICH IT WAS THE ONLY AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE. IN THE CASE OF THE PRG VOTE, TO WHICH THE US ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE, THE BALLOT WAS SENT OUT ON DECEMBER 23, 1974. SINCE THERE WAS NO ADVANCE CONSULTATION WITH US, AND WE WERE THUS UNAWARE THAT THE PRG WAS ON THE BALLOT, IT WAS PATENTLY IMPOSSIBLE TO POSE ANY QUESTIONS OF ANY SORT BEFORE THE VOTE WAS IN PROGRESS. IF IT IS "AWKWARD" TO POSE QUESTIONS DURING THE VOTE, THEN, IT SEEMS, WE ARE LEFT ONLY WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF ASKING FOR INTERPRETATIONS WHEN THE VOTE IS OVER. AT THAT POINT IT MIGHT BE TOO LATE.

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6. LANGLO REPLIED THAT HE COULD NOT PROPERLY COMMENT, AND THAT ANY RATE THE SEC GEN WAS HANDLING ALL THE DETAILS PERSONALLY. HE ADDED THAT IT WAS STILL NOT AT ALL CERTAIN THAT THE PRG WOULD GET A QUORUM MUCH LESS GET THE NECESSARY TWO-THIRDS NECESSARY TO BE ACCEPTED AN OBSERVER.

7. GRANTING THAT IT MIGHT STILL BE

TOO EARLY TO PREDICT THE OUTCOME WITH ANY
CERTAINTY, WE REPLIED THAT AT THIS POINT IN TIME WE WERE NOT
DISCUSSING THE POSSIBLE RESULTS BUT SIMPLY TRYING
TO MAKE THE POINT THAT WHATEVER THE FINAL COUNT
WE WISHED TO BE ABLE TO SAY THAT THE SECRETARIAT
HAD BEHAVED THROUGHOUT LIKE CAESAR'S WIFE - ABOVE
SUSPICION. VACILLATION ON PART OF SECRETARIAT
SUCH AS WE WERE NOW WITNESSING DID NOT GIVE MUCH
HOPE THAT THIS WISH WOULD BE FULFILLED.

8. WE CLOSED THE CONVERSATION WITH THE HOPE THAT
THE WMO WOULD DEMONSTRATE ITS WILLINGNESS TO CONSULT
WITH US ON POLITICAL MATTERS IN AS TIMELY A MANNER
AS THEY HAD SHOWN THEMSELVES PREPARED TO DO ON
TECHNICAL ISSUES. DALE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: OPPOSITION TO ADMISSION, MEETING OBSERVERS, COMMUNIST FRONT ORGANIZATIONS, MEETING VOTING RECORDS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975GENEVA01231
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750064-1090
From: GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750220/aaaaardb.tel
Line Count: 130
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 GENEVA 0254, 75 GENEVA 990
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUN 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <26 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSED PRG OBSERVER STATUS AT 7TH WMO CONGRESS
TAGS: PFOR, PDIP, AORG, SZ, VS, VN, IR, EG, WHO, OPEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006